

MORAL ASPECTS  
OF THE  
GREAT EXHIBITION OF 1851.

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A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE  
HIGH STREET CHAPEL, WARWICK,

ON SUNDAY, MAY 4TH, 1851,

BY THOMAS L. MARSHALL,

MINISTER OF THE CHAPEL.

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“ Much remains to conquer still ;  
Peace hath her victories,  
No less renowned than War.”

MILTON.

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WARWICK :

H. SHARPE, ADVERTISER-OFFICE, HIGH STREET.

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HALL COURT ; AND E. T. WHITFIELD,  
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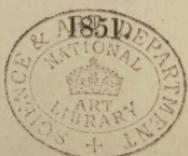
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EXHIBITION OF 1851

# A SERMON

BY CHARLES WARMICK

CHARLES WARMICK

1851, NOV 10

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I DEDICATE THIS,

MY FIRST AVOWED PUBLICATION,

TO THE CONGREGATION

ASSEMBLING FOR CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

IN THE

HIGH STREET CHAPEL, WARWICK,

WITH THE

MOST GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS OF THEIR UNVARIED KINDNESS

AND FRIENDLY SYMPATHY, AND IN THE HOPE THAT THE

SPIRITUAL RELATIONS, WHICH HAVE NOW EXISTED

BETWEEN US FOR FIVE YEARS, MAY PROVE AN

EVER-INCREASING SOURCE OF MUTUAL

HAPPINESS AND IMPROVEMENT.

THOMAS L. MARSHALL.

WARWICK, JUNE, 1851.



## MORAL ASPECTS OF THE GREAT EXHIBITION.

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Acts XVII. 26—"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth."

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The world has often beheld, in the successive cycles of its history, the great nations of the earth gathered together in some secluded valley, or wide, open plain, in the bloody conflict of mortal strife ; it has seen some of the fairest regions of its beautiful surface ravaged by the ruthless armies of men, while the unfortunate people have perished, by thousands, of disease and famine ; all the natural channels of trade and commerce have been closed to the industry of nations, and large bodies of their fellow-creatures, arrayed in gay vesture, and trained at vast labour and expense, to the highest pitch of mechanical skill, have been moved across the world like the mimic pieces of the chess-board in the hands of a practised player, in order to gratify the violent passions, or enforce the arbitrary claims of selfish monarchs and crafty statesmen.

All the relations of friendship and commerce between the contending nations are suddenly severed; innumerable ships, bearing the olive branch of peace, are driven from the sea, or turned to purposes of destruction; the threads of social and business intercourse, which had become woven into a thick web, are rudely broken; a vast burden of national debt is accumulated, weighing down the energies of a great people for several generations; and, after a long war, or a succession of wars, by which perhaps no single good result has been attained, a hollow peace is concluded, to be broken again at the first call of interest or passion; and, in proportion to the multitudes who have fallen, and the human misery that has been occasioned, are the rejoicings, and illuminations, and triumphal processions that follow. Fascinated by the delusive attractions of victory, all serious thought seems for the time lulled, public thanks and rewards await the successful actors on the blood-stained field of War, and who then ventures to inquire what is the right or justice of that fierce contention which has produced such terrible results, and is celebrated with such frantic outbursts of national enthusiasm?

“Look upon that picture, and on this:” contrast with the multitudes of armed warriors of many nations who assembled in bloody conflict on the fields of Austerlitz or Waterloo, that glorious army of twenty-five thousand citizens of the various countries of the globe, who assembled, on the 1st of May, in the

metropolis of our land, to celebrate, with Christian prayer and solemn rites, the opening of a grand Exhibition of the products of peaceful industry, and the wonderful results and useful inventions of modern science. That day, one of the most interesting, to our view, in the annals of human progress, was the Apotheosis of Peace, a glorious vindication of the dignity of Labour and the rights of Industry. In place of the mournful spectacle of contending armies, saturating the rich soil of a fertile plain with their life blood, we behold the true representatives of all the civilized nations of the earth,\* met together in a magnificent palace, filled with the ingenious productions of human skill, to celebrate the inauguration of a vast national undertaking, which is destined, we firmly believe, to bind together the various tribes of earth in the bonds of universal peace, and to multiply the comforts, the ornaments, and the utilities of life for the labouring many. The interests of nations, long divided, are for this year drawn together, and the conviction is widely diffused, that men, in the infinite variety of circumstances and countries in which they are placed, are yet but members of a common family, born not for hatred, but for love ; not for mutual injury, but for reciprocal services ; and best securing their own prosperity, by advancing the interests of the whole of their race, and promoting the universal triumphs of Labour.

\* With the single disgraceful exception of Naples. See one or two caustic articles in the *Examiner*, on the short-sighted policy of the King of that unhappy country, who, by practically ignoring this emblem of universal peace and union, almost seems to have voluntarily withdrawn his country from its place among the civilized nations of the globe.

In view then of the immense interest and importance of the great festival of industry, and concourse of nations, which will engage the best thought and attention of the civilized world during the remaining part of the year, I shall not, I trust, be charged with violating the proprieties of this sacred time and place, if I invite your attention to the reflections that are naturally suggested by the Opening of the Exhibition of 1851, and endeavour to impress upon your minds those moral considerations which we should at all times seek to derive from the great events not only of the past but of the ever active and living present.

By those of my hearers who rightly regard the commercial changes of the last few years, not as the triumph of any party or class in the community, but as a great vindication of the principle of national justice, and another link in the golden chain of universal peace, I shall not be considered as introducing an unfit topic into the temple of devotion, when I say that the first "moral aspect" on which I feel disposed to dwell, is the glorious result of Free-trade legislation. This great exhibition of the skill and industry of all nations we regard as the inauguration of that system of commercial policy, so successfully and happily carried out by one of England's noblest statesmen. The progress of Free-trade legislation offers the strongest motives for congratulation and Religious thankfulness, not only as diffusing happiness and plenty among the multitude of our own

country, and stimulating the great cause of social industry, but as helping to promote the principles of universal Peace, and to bind all men together by a community of interests. Free-trade represents the pacific principle, not inert and slumbering, but operating in its full and vigorous energy. It breaks through the narrow and selfish circle to which a mis-called patriotism and a blind sentiment of nationality would limit the social affections. It is a practical recognition of the great and elevating declaration of our text, that God, the Universal Father, "hath made of one blood," that He regards with the same tenderness, and will lead on to the same high destiny "all the nations of the earth."

And one result of international intercourse by trade and the peaceful rivalry of industry, will be to consolidate the interests, and secure the permanent continuance of *Peace*. Every year that peace is preserved, and the knowledge of one another promoted, helps to erase those national dislikes that feed the appetite for war. Distant nations will be connected with each other by the mutual interests of commerce. We become acquainted with their virtues, we learn their languages, we study their literature ;— their philosophers and poets instruct us ; their merchants benefit us ; and the ties of mutual service and dependence being mutually strengthened, our old national prejudices and antipathies rapidly disappear.

What can be more calculated than free and peaceful commerce to bring all the nations of the earth together and unite them by a sense of reciprocal wants? By what instrument can the noblest of revolutions be accomplished, and war and national contention be known no more upon earth? *Commerce, liberalized and emancipated commerce*, spreading, as it everywhere does, the conviction more widely every day, that it is not only more *profitable*, but, in every sense, more *Christian* and *benevolent*, to be engaged in the interchange of friendly communication than to live isolated from each other, directing every energy of the mind, and all the resources of the nation to works of natural hostility; *Commerce, free and unrestricted*, and conducted in the spirit of equal justice; *Commerce*, the great agent of peace, the source of national plenty, the creator and stimulus of honourable industry.

“ Every ship that leaves our shores in the pursuit of honourable traffic is a missionary of good; every article of manufacture, which, by its cheapness or excellence, recommends itself to the approval of a purchaser, conveys a moral lesson; every act of barter, by which enjoyment is conferred, suffering alleviated, or benefits of any kind produced, is another link added to the great chain of brotherhood which will eventually encircle the whole world.”

It is on these comprehensive principles, and with these inspiriting hopes, that we watch the rapid de-

velopments of *free commerce*; and we hail the Exhibition, which, through the removal of all protective duties, presents the grand spectacle of a concentration in one vast, unrivalled palace, of the works of skill, and the productions of nature and science from all the countries of the earth,—as one of the first and greatest triumphs of the principle of *Free-trade*.\*

Another thought in connexion with our subject is the remarkable progress and wonderful discoveries of *modern Science*. There is nothing in which we can all be more agreed, that in this age an immense addition has been made to our knowledge of external Nature, and, indeed, of the whole creation of God, both living and inanimate. The wonderful rapidity and extent of the progress of scientific knowledge may, in truth, be regarded as one of the most distinguishing features of modern times. This seems to be peculiarly the age of discovery and mechanical invention. The most astonishing progress is daily made in laying open to our wondering gaze the productions, the operations, and the phenomena of Nature. The heavens, the earth, the sea, and all things that are therein, have become the subjects of human observation and research to a degree never known in former times. New planets, new worlds, have been discovered, revolving in the boundless universe,—nay,

\* In connexion with this part of my subject, I beg to call the attention of my readers to a very able tract, published a few years ago by Dr. Bowring, and entitled, "The Political and Commercial Advantages of Peace," to which I am indebted for some of the above ideas.

even the motion of this world itself has been rendered perceptible to the wondering senses by an extraordinary mechanical process, hardly yet clearly explained or fully developed. The very bowels of the earth have been explored and brought to light, to be interpreted by the unwearyed eye of Science. And now, the crowning wonder of all has come to pass, and the most useful and ingenious inventions, the most striking discoveries, and the curious natural productions of the most distant regions of the globe are brought together into one place, and arranged with consummate order and beauty in a building which is itself the most wonderful monument of scientific skill.

Such, and far greater than I am able to describe, are the discoveries of modern Science. And these inventions and productions of human skill and ingenuity, to which I have referred, are all rapidly "conducting to the welfare of the people and the common interest of the human race, strengthening the bond of union among the nations of the earth, and promoting a friendly and honourable rivalry in the useful exercise of those faculties which have been conferred by a beneficent Providence for the good and happiness of mankind." \*

Science, we may also remark, has now passed from mere abstract speculation into practical life. It is no longer limited to the researches of a few master-

\* Her Majesty's reply to the Report of the Royal Commissioners at the opening of the Exhibition.

minds; no longer confined within the walls of those close Corporations, the Universities, or the Royal Societies. It is studied and used by practical, active-minded men of the world, as a mighty power, by which nature is not only to be opened to our knowledge, but subjected to our actual necessities. It is conferring on us that dominion over earth, and sea, and air, which was prophesied in the first command given to man by his Maker: and this dominion is now employed not to exalt the few at the expense of the many, but to multiply the comforts, the ornaments, the luxuries, and utilities of life for the toiling millions.

One great result of the progress of science, as it has somewhere been justly observed, is to give new prominence and force of conviction to the truth that God has not cast His creatures into the world there to prosper or perish as they might find it suited to their nature. He has adapted the material world itself, by the most gracious exercise of His wisdom and power, to the nature of the inhabitants that He has made to dwell therein, fashioning both it and them in such a manner that all things should become ministers for good, the unwearied and unfailing causes of their happiness. Let but a spirit of Religion preside over the investigations of science, and a spirit of Reason over the interpretation of the Scriptures, and then God's two great books of Nature and Revelation would be found to conjoin in teaching the same glorious truths; the harmony which reigns

in the mind of God, where dwell eternal wisdom and goodness, will have its counterpart in the mind of man, who can only become truly wise, and good, and happy, as he grows in the likeness of his all-perfect Maker.

There are many timid and truth-fearing persons who seem to believe that the rapid progress of Science is fast loosening the foundations of Religion, and subverting the authority of the sacred Scriptures. The Evangelical mind, in particular, has ever ranged itself among the determined enemies of secular education, and manifested the old Romanist spirit of hostility to the higher forms of intellectual culture. We can sympathise with none of those narrow fears which would attempt to bind down the intellect, and which would venture to assert that there can be any possible contradiction between God's revelations in Nature and in Scripture. Whatever may be the immediate effect upon shallow and unreflective minds, incapable of comprehending the great whole, and unconscious of the humility of true wisdom, we have no fear for the ultimate results of scientific investigation. True Science is ever essentially *religious*. The narrow creeds and dogmas of men, indeed, may pale their dim lights, and sink into their natural insignificance before the stupendous revelations of that book of nature, which is, on every page, free, impartial, universal in its lessons, but the true religion, whose seat is the bosom of God, whose voice is the harmony of the world.

the morality that endeavours to embody in active life the perfect character of the holy Jesus—these can only derive new sanction and authority from those material discoveries which display the Invisible more and more as a Being of impartial benevolence ; which unfold the universe to our wondering gaze, as designed with equal order and beauty in all its departments, from the worlds that revolve on their everlasting axes above, to the humblest flower that sends up its sweet odour from beneath our feet, working in all things for the highest good and happiness of the intelligent creatures of God.

Another “moral aspect” of our subject is, *the value and the dignity of Labour.*

The time was, and is not long passed away, when the honest and hard-working sons of toil were regarded with haughty contempt by the princes and nobles of the land ; and those who lived upon plunder and rapine, or on pensions, often bestowed, through several generations, for some disgraceful services of their forefathers, would have thought themselves defiled by contact with the honourable and industrious *workers*, on whom the true prosperity of their country depended. The time was, when the royal countenance and national honours were chiefly bestowed on the successful warriors and astute politicians of the age, and the halls of palaces and the lists of the tournament were the scenes of regal spectacles and processions.

Now, however, in this age of practical industry and mechanical invention, a *palace*, more glorious than the visions of romance, is raised for the products of enterprize and skill, and the great festival of labour is opened by the voice of Majesty, and graced with the presence of the noblest in the land; and princes and people, peers and peasants alike, concur in the prayer that this great monument of practical genius may encourage the arts of peace and industry, contribute to the welfare of the human race, and tend to realize the unity of nations; for “God hath created of one blood all the nations of men for to dwell, in peace and concord, on all the face of the earth.”

Labour, the world’s great ordinance for all, is now beginning to take its due rank and dignity among men. We are learning more than ever before to honour the worker, the toiler, him who produces, and not only him who consumes. We are learning to honour the toiling mind, and the working hand, and the strong and resolute heart, ever true to the voice of conscience and the dictate of duty. It is, we know, the law of nature that industry, working either with head or hand, lies at the foundation of all human happiness and improvement. Labour is not to be groaned over and lamented as the hard fate, the inevitable destiny of man. The world is the great appointed school for work. The world of mind and that of matter are alike shapeless and useless without the creative hand of labour. What is

there glorious in the world that is not the product of severe toil, working either with mind or hand? The pyramids of Egypt, the buried cities of Nineveh, the temples and churches of Europe, the remains of Central America, that have left but a wreck behind of all their ancient glory,—what are these but the mighty footsteps of *labour* all the world round! Labour is the great function, the peculiar distinction of man. He can be nothing, do nothing, achieve nothing, without working, and significant and true indeed are the words of the old monkish legend—“*Laborare est orare.*”

“Two men” (says a quaint writer) “do I honour, and no third. First, the toil-worn craftsman, that, with earth-made implement, laboriously conquers the earth and makes her man’s. Venerable to me is the hard hand; crooked, coarse; wherein, notwithstanding, lies a cunning virtue, indefeasibly royal, as of the sceptre of this planet. Venerable, too, is the rugged face, with its rude intelligence, for it is the face of a man living manlike. Toil on, toil on: *thou* art in thy duty, be out of it who may: thou toilst for the altogether indispensable, for daily bread. A second man I honour, and still more highly—him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable, not for daily bread, but the bread of life. Is not he, too, in his duty, endeavouring towards inward harmony, revealing this by act or by word, through all his outward endeavours, be they high or

low? Highest of all, when his outward and his inward endeavour are one: when we can name him *Artist*; not earthly Craftsman only, but inspired Thinker, that with heaven-made implement conquers Heaven for us! If the poor and humble toil that we have food, must not the high and glorious toil for him in return, that he have Light, Guidance, Freedom, Immortality?—These two, in all their degrees, I honour: all else is chaff and dust, which let the wind blow whither it listeth.”\*

Let the honour then that is due be given to *labour*. Let Queen, and Princes, and Nobles, assemble together in high state in the palace of Industry to do honour to labour. Let the trumpet raise its shrill notes, and the organ sound forth its majestic tones, and the flags of all nations wave together in peaceful union, not now in honour of the successful warrior or the crafty statesman, but of the *thinking head* and the *skilful hand*. Now, in the glowing words of the Poet—

“We'll try the rivalry of Arts,  
Of Science, Learning, Freedom, Fame—  
We'll try who first shall light the world  
With Charity's divinest flame—  
Who best shall elevate the poor,  
And teach the wealthy to be true:  
We want no rivalry of arms,  
We want no boasts of Waterloo.” †

\* *Sartor Resartus*. Page 236.

† *Mackay's Voices from the Crowd*.

With pride and satisfaction, then, do we regard the Exhibition of Industry, in its moral aspect, as a great manifestation of the true worth and value of labour ; as a sign that honourable *work* is henceforward to take its rightful place and rank in the world's estimation, and meet with—not the patronage, but the *respect* and *sympathy* of the highest and noblest of our fellow-beings.

The last “Moral Aspect,” presented by the Exhibition, which I shall at present notice, is the new power and diffusion which will be given to the great principle of *Universal Peace*. The false lustre of the military hero is fast growing dim before the advancing intelligence of the times. We have other heroes now than the leaders of armies. The great Captains of Industry are acknowledged as the heroes of the present and the future age. A nobler order of character is now admired and diffused—the character of active intelligence and undaunted perseverance in every good work ; a higher order of courage is demanded—that moral courage which stands up with fearless heart in the cause of Truth and Right ; and, in their defence, braves the ridicule, the hatred, the opposition of a world.

Yes ! new and mighty powers are now rising among us,—Peace, Gentleness, Love ;—moral and spiritual powers, which the world, and especially the *Christian* world, will, ere long, acknowledge to be its grand motive forces.

The great social improvements and mechanical inventions of the present age, all favour the rapid triumphs of the cause of universal peace. The whole of the active intelligence of the public mind is now directed to pacific objects. Labour and Capital, human Skill and Science, are all allied with the cause of moral and intellectual progress. And we can hardly entertain a more elevating thought in reference to the Great Exhibition, than that the practical energy and wisdom of the civilized world should be now engaged—in various spheres of exertion, but all harmoniously co-operating—in advancing the interests of *Peace*—Peace associated with the highest culture, with progressive virtue, and public prosperity.

I do not wish to be understood by these remarks as expressing my unqualified assent to the extravagant views professed by our modern Peace Societies. I cannot hold that every other interest of humanity must be remorselessly sacrificed to inviolable peace, and that no invasion of our liberties, no trampling on our most sacred rights, no foreign aggression, can justify the guilt of war. We must take care that the commercial spirit of the age does not altogether quench our patriotism and public spirit, nor extinguish in us every sentiment of sympathy for the oppressed, and a generous enthusiasm for our own just rights and national liberties. Still we cannot but strongly hope and believe that the Exhibition of Industry will form another and a permanent “bond of peace,” will add another link to the chain of

union among all the nations of the earth, and will help to extend and deepen the conviction that no material interests, no mere diplomatic disputes can justify any but a strictly *defensive* war.

The increasing facilities of international communication, the mutual interests of commerce, and, above all, the close personal connexion in which large numbers of the various nations of the globe are drawn together this year in the honourable rivalry of skill, will do more than kings, ministers, or formal treaties, to unite men in the bonds of peace, and remove the causes and inducements of war. Kindness, courtesy, national hospitality, will soon be acknowledged as powers mightier than armies, stronger than the strongest weapons that arsenal can forge, until, as our great poet of humanity has said—

“Your gentleness shall force

More than your force move us to gentleness.”

Let us, my Christian friends, remember that our only warfare now is with sin, error, and ignorance. Let us here exhibit the same courage and perseverance that distinguish the warrior on the field of battle. Entertain and endeavour to diffuse just ideas of the true honour and glory of nations. The true glory of a country consists in free and equal institutions, where every man enjoys his just rights, in the development of intellectual and moral power, in the diffusion of knowledge, and the triumphs of peace and philanthropy. Learn to honour

chiefly, not military courage, nor those qualities we share alike with the brutes, but the spirit of true Christian worth and intelligence. Learn to venerate the heroism of the Cross, that true magnanimity which lays down life itself in the service of God and Man. The real and lasting benefactors of our race,—the martyrs of science, freedom, religion,—let these be our heroes and models. For these let us twine the laurel wreath ; to their memory erect the marble statues ; in honour of their glorious victories raise the loud triumphal Pæan.

And with a degree of reverence only less than that due to Christian worth, let us honour the scientific discoverer, the Heaven-inspired Artist, the honest Workman, however humble, who may have done something to contribute to the happiness of his brethren and the cause of human progress.

Oh ! then we shall hear no more of war and the warrior ; the predicted reign of Christ will at last dawn upon the world, and realize that golden age when earth shall become more like heaven, and men more like their divine master, Jesus Christ.

“ Down the dark future, through long generations,  
The sounds of strife grow fainter and then cease ;  
And like a bell, with solemn, sweet vibrations,  
I hear once more the voice of Christ say, ‘ Peace.’

“ Peace ! and no longer from its brazen portals  
 The blast of War’s great organ shakes the skies !  
 But beautiful as songs of the immortals,  
 The holy melodies of love arise.” \*

I cannot conclude more appropriately than with the almost prophetic language of the late Dr. Channing :—“ At the thought of this reign of benevolence, the whole earth seems to me to burst forth into rejoicing. I see the arts and civilization spreading gladness over deserted regions, and clothing the wilderness with beauty. **NATIONS, UNITED IN A LEAGUE OF PHILANTHROPY, ADVANCE WITH CONTINUALLY ACCELERATING STEP IN KNOWLEDGE AND POWER. I SEE STUPENDOUS PLANS ACCOMPLISHED, OCEANS UNITED, DISTANT REGIONS CONNECTED, AND EVERY CLIMATE CONTRIBUTING ITS PRODUCTION AND TREASURES TO THE IMPROVEMENT AND HAPPINESS OF THE RACE.**” †

Now unto God, the Father of all mercies, through Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, be all glory and honour ascribed for evermore. *Amen.*

\* Longfellow.

† Memoirs of Channing, vol. ii., page 62.

